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EFFECTS of COMPETITIVE APPOINTMENTS in the CIVIL SERVICE
of INDIA.

THE following article is from a recent number of the "Friend of India." It will go a long way to dispose of any remaining scruples as regards the good effects of Competitive Appointments to the Indian Civil Service. The truth really is, that if India is to be retained at all by this country, it can only be by sending to it year by year young men who carry with them the latest and best results of our European training and cultivation.—ED. S. J.]

"The exclusive Civil Service of India owe their extinction to the obstinacy of their indulgent masters, the Court of Directors. First they were overtaken by the system of appointments by competition, and Haileybury, with the associations of half a century, was closed for ever. This would have been prevented, Haileybury might have been in existence, and the directors or their successors might still have possessed the cherished privilege of patronage, had the Court accepted the offer of Mr. Macaulay during the discussions on the Charter Act of 1833. Then it was proposed to allow the nomination by the directors of *four* candidates for every vacancy, and to choose the best of these by examination. Thus the area of selection would have been increased fourfold, the principle of emulation would have been introduced with all its healthy influences, young 'writers' would have been chosen superior in qualifications to the mass, the Court would have had the honour of having anticipated modern reforms in the safe use of the competitive system, and the sweets of patronage would have been preserved. But the directors were blinded, their opposition succeeded, and Macaulay returned to the charge at the next Charter Act discussion in 1854, and swept away nomination and patronage altogether.

"The revolution would have stopped here but for the increased blindness of the directors, which soon after ended in the extinction of the Company as a governing power. For every monopoly of which they were deprived they clung all the more convulsively to the remainder, and so they perished without pity. In March, 1856, when they would not allow the most distinguished uncovenanted judge in the country to hold a covenanted appointment, Lord Dalhousie told them they must then increase the strength of the Bengal Civil Service from 500 to 600, if he was to be responsible for the good government of the empire. The empire was daily growing, the regiments in the country were drained of their best officers to fill civil appointments, new names were given to old offices that uncovenanted officials might fill them, and thus an absurd, because inflexible, rule was evaded. Had the Court then kept up such a supply of young civilians that there would have been enough to fill every covenanted office in India, the Government here would never have dreamt of draughting so many military men and uncovenanted

servants into high civil offices. Lord Dalhousie wanted 100 additional writers, and the Court, 'admitting that some increase has become manifestly necessary,' promised him just 50. But the mutinies came, massacre and death were busy; there was a rush to England at the close of 1858, and the service, the *minimum* strength of which should have been 600, was reduced to 478.

"By the close of 1859 so gigantic was the evil that, out of 116 covenanted civil appointments in the Punjab, only 43 were filled by *civilians*, and 71 by military or uncovenanted officials. In Oude there were only 10 *civilians*, while there were 26 military or uncovenanted officials in covenanted appointments. Mr. Edmonstone protested against any more North-West *civilians* being draughted to the non-regulation provinces. Not a man could be found in Bengal to fill five vacancies in Oude and the Punjab. Nagpore was short of officers. At last 6 young *civilians* were transferred from Bombay, the only place, as the law now stands, from which they could be taken to another Presidency than their own. Still the evil grew; the regulation provinces were not benefited; Mr. Grant was creating more subdivisions in Bengal, and at last Lord Canning was forced to stop furloughs and to make a proposal, in which Sir Bartle Frere concurred, but which shocked Mr. Beadon, 'that a certain number of appointments to the Civil Service be thrown open to competition by young officers of the Indian forces who are now in India.' Lord Canning would have made thirty such appointments. This would have opened the regulation provinces to the unemployed officers of the absorbed Indian army as effectually as the Punjab, Oude, and Pegu. Trained men, with some Indian experience, must be found to direct the administrative details of an empire which Lord Dalhousie had extended to its natural frontiers. Thus, because the Court of Directors rejected a modified competitive system which would have retained patronage in 1833, all patronage was taken from them in 1854. Because they would not give Lord Dalhousie 100 extra *civilians* in 1853, and reproved him for the crime of allowing Mr. Halliday to put an old uncovenanted judge in a *civilian's* seat, the Civil Service monopoly of office has been extinguished, and any Governor may appoint any man to any office under certain wise and just safeguards.

"The service thus exhausted is now being partially revived by throwing open 80 vacancies to competition in *each* of the years 1860, 1861, and 1862, instead of 40 as formerly. In 1856 the first set of *competitive civilians* landed in India. The forty men of 1859 are now being appointed as assistants in Bengal and the North-West. There is no official, from the Governor-General down to the district officer, who has not expressed his satisfaction with his competitive subordinates, with only a few exceptions. The superiority of the new men, as industrious, conscientious, and able officers, is as undoubted as the fear that they would be mere bookworms has proved unfounded. The competitioner whose whole life has been spent in the schools and the hands of examiners pants for the day when he shall be invested with full powers, having past his last examination, with a degree of intensity which the mass of the Haileybury men, who merely sipped at knowledge, cannot feel.

"The reports of the Civil Service Commissioners show that it is not the first class university men, of brilliant parts and undoubted genius, who are tempted to come out to India, and whom disgust would soon convert into miserable failures, but youths of ordinary abilities, developed by untiring industry and high class training. If India was the empire of the middle classes when the Company was in its glory, it is still more so now that a new stratum of that society has been pierced, which is untainted by the family intermixture that make men physically and intellectually effete.

"The following list of the professions of the *fathers of the successful candidates of 1859 and 1860* shows how few sons of Haileybury civilians now enter the service by competition, where they only not long ago would have been admitted to it by patronage:—

	1859.	1860.		1859.	1860.
Officer in the Queen's } Army.....	—	2	Farmer	1	1
Ditto in the Indian Army	1	—	Ironmonger	—	1
Ditto in the Navy.....	—	3	Land Agent	1	1
Ditto in the Militia	—	1	Merchant	1	7
Ditto in the French Army	—	1	Organist	—	1
Indian Civil Service	2	2	Printer	—	1
Home ditto	—	2	Professor in College.....	2	1
Colonial ditto	—	1	Schoolmaster.....	2	1
Church Clergyman	9	16	Steward	—	1
Wesleyan ditto	2	—	Undertaker	—	1
Presbyterian ditto	1	—	Wine Merchant.....	—	1
Law	2	3	Manufacturer	1	—
Medicine	4	10	Miller.....	1	—
Gentleman.....	6	11	Registrar of diocese	1	—
Banker	—	2	Secretary to public society	1	—
Butcher	—	1	Upholsterer	1	—
Civil Engineer	—	1	Tailor.....	1	—
Linendraper	—	1	Not named	—	5
Druggist	—	1	Total	40	80

"All these 120 youths came fresh from college, with the exception of ten, one of whom had been a barrister, one had been reading for the bar, one had been an engineer, one had been a militia lieutenant, two had been merchants' clerks, and four had been schoolmasters. Since this is the class which provides India with civilians, and since England is stocked with university men of the same calibre, we are not of those who anticipated that the opening of the service to *tried officers already in India* will materially diminish the number and value of candidates in England. Still less will this be the case under the new form which the Civil Service Bill assumed as finally passed by the Commons. Sir Charles Wood so far yielded to the representations of Mr. Vansittart and the existing Service as to state in the body of the Bill, that to the great bulk of the covenanted appointments, a list of which is given, *no outsider* shall be appointed who has not resided *seven years* in India, and has not passed an examination in the vernacular of the district and all the local and depart-

mental tests. Under this stringent rule jobbery becomes impossible, the admission of experienced uncovenanted officers will be very rare, and the full rights of competitive civilians are secured in a manner which may sometimes prove detrimental to the interests of the State. Thus, while the Bill seems to carry out Lord Canning's suggestion, it will probably shut the door against the Staff Corps, from which the service might otherwise have been inundated; for there are few officers of seven years' standing who will consent to pass the two professional examinations to which civilians are subjected. Still, with the Finance and Customs' Departments and the Military, Marine, and Public Works Secretariats open to the best men, with the second-class youth of the home universities pouring out to India, and with the Staff Corps monopolizing nearly all the non-regulation provinces, we may after a few years expect to find the Civil Service of India distinguished for vigour and intellect, freshness of thought, and zeal in the service of the public which no mere monopoly, however able, could long continue to display."
